



# Success Stories

Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.

## Arresting Her Weight Gain

**AS A 10-YEAR AIR FORCE LAW ENFORCEMENT VETERAN, CAROLYN BARNES WAS USED TO BEING IN TOP CONDITION.**

But when she quit smoking, Carolyn gained weight and struggled to take it off. Then a family emergency made her realize it was time for a change. With the help of her Cleveland-based Louis Stokes Medical Center VA MOVE! team, Carolyn lost 35 pounds!



### When did you first struggle with your weight?

"I have always prided myself for being in great physical condition. Well, 10 years ago, I quit smoking because 'extending your life for 10 years' seemed more important at 50 than at 20. So I quit.

"But it was not without negative effects. I gained 60 pounds. It seemed no matter what I did, I could not drop the weight. So I just resigned myself to the fact that I was going to be old and fat.

"The past few years, during my annual physicals, my VA doctor would ask me if I was interested in the MOVE! Program. After she explained what MOVE! was, I would decline, thinking, 'I'm not *that* bad.'"

### ***What changed your mind?***

“Last year, my older brother had a heart attack and a double bypass. The doctor told my sister and me that our brother needed to lose 100 pounds. I remember thinking, ‘I’m heading there!’

“So last year at my annual physical, when my doctor asked if I wanted to sign up for the MOVE! Program, I answered, ‘YES!’ without hesitation.”

### ***How was your MOVE! experience?***

“I started my 16-week (Tuesday Women’s) program in November 2017 at 187 pounds. I had received a Fitbit for my birthday a few months earlier and began keeping track of not only my steps but my daily consumption.

“The more goals and changes I made, the pounds just started dropping off 2 and 3 at a time. Mostly, just applying the simple basic idea that you have to burn more calories than you consume to lose weight.”

### ***Did you meet your goals?***

“I am happy to report that I lost 35 pounds and went from a size 16 pants to a size 10/12. I had a New Years goal of 30 pounds, which I met, but I also had a goal of getting down to 150 pounds by late July, which I missed by 2 pounds! My MOVE! clinic ended in March, but I continued to drop a few more pounds. Maintaining weight is also a measure of success!”

“I have more energy—  
and I have more fun  
shopping for clothes  
now!”

– Carolyn Barnes



### ***What advice do you have for other Veterans struggling with weight?***

“There are so many health problems [due] to obesity. Get in better shape while you can, and cut down the chances of heart attacks, strokes, or diabetes in your old age.

“And keep moving!”